

At the present time we are happy in the visit to Canada of Her Royal Highness the Princess Elizabeth, and her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh. Their sincerity and devotion to duty, their graciousness and charm, have won all hearts. As they proceed across Canada they cannot but feel the warmth of our welcome and the affectionate esteem in which we hold them.

At this session of parliament, there will be discussed serious and urgent problems facing the people of Canada—inflation, pensions, the St. Lawrence Waterway, and, I hope, the Saskatchewan River power and irrigation project.

I realize that it is customary to be brief in seconding the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, but if honourable senators will permit, I should like to speak of the situation which for two years in succession has faced the western farmer. Last year, after the prospect of an abundant crop, more than half the wheat was frozen; and this year, delayed spring sowing and prolonged rains during the past seven weeks have caused serious loss in the quantity and quality of the grain. How great the loss may not be known until next spring; but this we do know, that in large area the grain will grade not much higher than it did last year. I am informed by reliable farmers that wheat recently threshed is grading 4 and 5 tough, which means damp wheat. At the present time it is estimated that 35 per cent of this year's wheat will be non-millable. Honourable senators will see that 35 per cent non-millable wheat out of an estimated crop of 550 million bushels will leave more than 175 million bushels of feed wheat this year.

Most of us in this house will recall last year's protest from the farmer about the price he received for his frozen wheat. We now find that there is on hand more than 150 million bushels of this low-grade wheat, and there is the likelihood of a larger amount this year. The farmer may well ask himself if it might not be wise to take a lower price and dispose of this product. The low-grade wheat is now competing with oats, barley and other feed grains which have dropped considerably in price. The probable cause of the drop is the abundance of inferior feed wheat. The situation is not unlike that of 1928 when we had a frozen crop and some of it was carried over for three or four years, so that by the time the interest and carrying charges were paid the farmer received little or nothing for his wheat. Let us hope the mistake of that year will not be repeated. Until this inferior product is disposed of, the farmer will only be competing against his

production of other feed grains, thus lowering the price of current produce. The storage space is needed for the better grade wheat which will bring a good price.

If Grade 4 wheat, the only low grade which may be used for white flour, is so used—and some of it had to be used this year—it must go through the mill twice, once to remove the natural bran coating, and again to remove the second layer formed when it was frozen. Even if the protein is good, the miller can use but little of this poor wheat, for he has not the milling capacity to handle it.

What is more alarming, especially in Saskatchewan and Alberta, is the possibility that the coming year will bring a situation similar to that of the past two years. The soil at present is so saturated with moisture that, unless the winter is mild with little snow, we may be faced with even later sowing of grain next year.

Honourable members are aware that the people of Western Canada are deeply interested in the St. Lawrence Waterway. For fifty years or more it has been the hope of the western farmer that this project would be undertaken. It would give us a direct sea route almost to the edge of the prairies; not only lake boats, but ocean-going vessels, would be available to carry our produce to the world. I sincerely hope that the Prime Minister will be successful in his agreement and undertaking with the United States.

The people of Saskatchewan are likewise vitally interested in the Saskatchewan River power and irrigation project, which also has been under consideration for many years. During that time many able men have passed on its feasibility, and recently a commission was finally set up to pass judgment. Not only is there a need for water in cities and towns, and for irrigation purposes, but for the generation of power as well; in fact this need is as great in the West as in the East. Only a fraction of our farmers have electrical power available to them. It has been stated that had it not been for the dams built in the United States during the depression years, with the water and power they made available to adjacent cities, we might not have won the last war. I hope the government will give immediate consideration to both the projects I have mentioned, so that all sections of Canada may benefit.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Haig, the debate was adjourned.